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SIPDIS
FROM ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY RENO L HARNISH TO LAGOS ESTH OFFICER

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TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAGR](#) [TBIO](#) [SOCI](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: KUDOS FOR ABUJA

REF: A. 08ABUJA 2129
 B. 08ABUJA 2309
 C. 08ABUJA 2515
 D. 09ABUJA 01

Kudos to Embassy Abuja for several recent cables (08 Abuja 2129, 08 Abuja 2309, 08 Abuja 2515, and Abuja 01) emphasizing two key ESTH issues in Nigeria - health and conservation of forests and wildlife. These series of cables highlight continued deterioration within both the public health and wildlife/forest conservation sectors unless key stakeholders come together and formulate sound policies that promote good governance and strengthen local capacity. The 2008 cables are helpful to Washington in keeping the interagency aware of both Nigerian and the Embassy's efforts at tackling polio eradication. We are excited to see the extent of these efforts including reports from the U.S. Mission Nigeria Action Team on Polio; the Nigeria Polio Eradication Initiative Task Force Group; the Ambassador's outreach to local governors, and the more troubling report of a case of type 1 polio in Lagos - the first since 2006. Abuja 01 details a worrisome deterioration of conservation efforts across Nigeria following decentralization of administrative control of forest and wildlife reserves from the central government to the states which lack resource capacity in conservation management, leading to increased poaching and deforestation. OES commends Post and newly arrived ESTH officer Feleke Assefa for reporting on key ESTH issues - and we enjoyed seeing that Embassy Abuja's first cable in 2009 covered ESTH priorities. We encourage Post's continued cooperation with the GON on polio eradication, as well your engagement in highlighting the importance of ESTH issues and the detrimental effect that poor governance plays in conservation efforts.
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